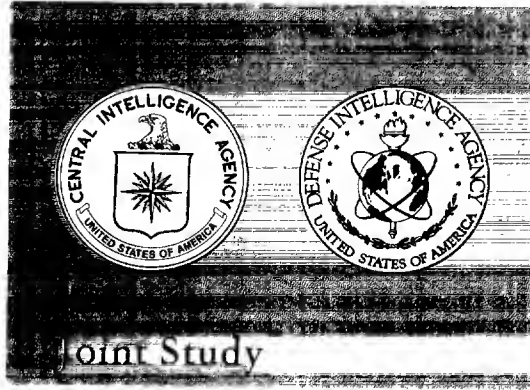


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Survey of Communist Military Developments in Indochina

ARMY
review(s)
completed.

NSA review completed

DIA review(s)
completed.

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3 July 1974

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**SURVEY OF COMMUNIST
MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA***

(This report covers the period
June 19 - July 2, 1974)

The Key Points

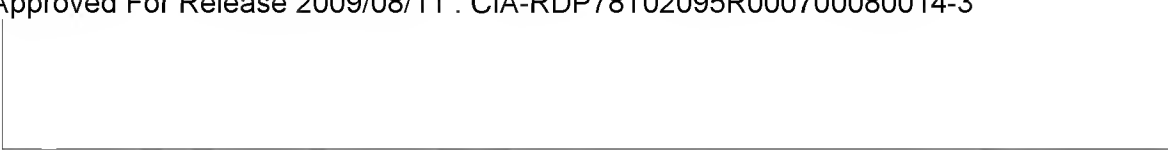
- No new infiltration groups were detected moving southward in the pipeline during the past two weeks. From September 1, 1973 through June 30, 1974, about 94,000 troops started south from North Vietnam, about the same as during the 1972-73 infiltration cycle.
- Communist supply shipments in southern North Vietnam were fairly heavy during the past two weeks, while in South Vietnam, large quantities of ordnance were again shipped to VC MR 5.
- [redacted] photography of southern North Vietnam and northern Quang Tri Province in South Vietnam showed moderate logistic activity and improvements in roads and logistic facilities.
- Although the 1973-74 dry season included some of the heaviest Khmer Communist (KC) shellings of the war, Communist firepower has not been decisive. A detailed discussion of KC firepower is contained in Annex B.

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* This report has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

[redacted] July 3, 1974

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Preface

This report summarizes evidence received during the reporting period of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military supplies toward and into South Vietnam, (II) significant Communist combat activity, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

DETAILS

I. Infiltration and Redeployment of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies

Personnel Infiltration

1. No new regular infiltration groups were detected moving southward through the Vinh area within the past two weeks.* Four new special-purpose groups, however, with about 75 people, were noted moving through the pipeline. All of the groups are traveling to northern South Vietnam or contiguous border areas.

2. Between September 1, 1973 and June 30, 1974 -- the period comprising the regular infiltration cycle -- about 94,000 troops started south from North Vietnam. As shown in the table below (DoD figures are indicated in parentheses),

**Comparative Starts of Troops
from North Vietnam, by Destination
September 1-June 30**

	1972-73	1973-74
Total	94,000	94,000 (91,500)
MR Tri-Thien	33,000	5,000 (2,500)
MR 5	9,000	17,000
B-3 Front	14,000	10,000
COSVN	26,000	39,500
Southern Laos/MR 559	12,000	22,500

the level of troop infiltration was about the same as during the 1972-73 cycle, although the pattern of destinations differed markedly. In 1973-74, more troops were sent to COSVN than to any other area. This reflected the Communists' efforts to rebuild their combat units in southern South Vietnam, which, in general, were weaker than those in other parts of the country. In contrast, MR Tri-Thien which absorbed the largest share of troops during the 1972-73 cycle, received the fewest last season. MR 5, on the other hand, had twice as many troops dispatched to

its command. North Vietnam also sent about 10,000 specially trained personnel to the southern war zones during the 1973-74 cycle, slightly fewer than the 12,000 sent a year earlier.

3. According to a recent message, some 4,600 northbound personnel were received in the Vinh area during a 25-day period in May. Most of the 4,600 exfiltrators were sick and wounded persons, indicating that Hanoi is continuing to evacuate large numbers of such personnel. So far in 1974, more than 41,000 personnel have been detected moving northward.

Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies

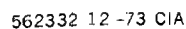
North Vietnam

4. Communist supply shipments through southern North Vietnam apparently were fairly heavy during the past two weeks, in contrast to the modest level noted during the first half of June. On June 23-25, for example, logistic units near Vinh received nearly 250 tons of ordnance and explosives and dispatched about 180 tons. Several days later, on June 28-29, another 200 tons of munitions were received and 140 tons sent out in what appeared to be a steady stream of cargo through the area. Farther south, in the area between Quang Khe and the DMZ, little information on supply shipments was received, except for a report that Binh Trám 16 was to receive 230 tons of unidentified Chinese equipment on June 24.

5. Some of the explosives detected in COMINT during this reporting period probably will be used to repair roads in southern North Vietnam damaged by Typhoon Diana. According to a June 20 intercept, Route 15 and some other roads in Quang Binh Province were blocked as a result of heavy rains caused by the storm. Press reports also have indicated similar damage to roads. Although these problems undoubtedly have caused some delays in supply shipments, they have not greatly affected the overall pace of logistic activity.

Laos

6. According to a June 23 COMINT intercept, the North Vietnamese are using roads just south of the Ban Karai Pass (see the transportation map). On that date, a unit located just south of the pass reported 102 trucks carrying personnel. It is not known, however, whether the troops were local units, infiltrators, or exfiltrators. Other than the activity south of Ban Karai Pass, there was little information on logistic activity in southern Laos.



South Vietnam

7. Following the pattern of the past few months, large quantities of ordnance were again shipped along Route 9 by the NVA 541st Engineer Regiment -- much of it destined for Communist units along the central coast in VC MR 5. On June 25, for example, a subordinate element of the 541st Regiment was informed that 164 vehicles would arrive shortly to pick up an unspecified quantity of ordnance, which was to be delivered to VC MR 5 as part of the "June distribution plan." Several days later, on June 28, another 80 vehicles were scheduled to leave the area, although no destination was given.

8. Most of the supplies being moved to VC MR 5 are probably traveling along the western highlands supply route. Photography of the past two weeks showed several hundred trucks moving south along the corridor, with the heaviest activity just south of Khe Sanh.

II. Significant Communist Combat Activity

9. Communist cease-fire violations decreased during the past two weeks to a daily average of 88 incidents, compared with 99 reported the previous two weeks. ARVN and Communist casualties have also decreased from the previous weeks' daily average of 37 and 158, respectively, to the past two weeks' average of 31 and 89. Significant activity in MR 1 included the sinking of an NVA landing craft off the coast of Quang Tri Province and Communist attacks on the ammunition and petroleum storage sites at Phu Bai and Camp Evans. In MR 3, the government operation to retake Base 82 that was suspended on June 20 was re-initiated on the 27th. Because of heavy Communist defenses and counterattacks that resulted in extensive losses in men and equipment, ARVN commanders, on July 2, decided to shift from frontal attacks and to apply air and artillery pressure and light ground probes to reduce NVA/VC strong points and inflict maximum casualties on the Communist forces while reducing ARVN losses. Elsewhere, the Communists attacked ARVN forces providing security for the hamlets and resettlement areas east and southeast of Xuan Loc in Long Khanh Province.

III. Other Military Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities in Indochina

10. [] photography of North Vietnam provided the first usable cloud-free coverage of the southern Panhandle since []. Clouds covered the rest of the country except for the rail border crossing at Lao Cai. Highlights of the preliminary readout of the mission follow.

Military Equipment

11. Twenty-five medium tanks were parked at the small Liem Thien armor storage area located off Route 1 some ten miles north of the DMZ. These tanks, most of which were canvas-covered, apparently have been parked at this facility for nearly a year and probably denote the location of an NVA tank battalion.

[redacted] showed 27 canvas-covered tanks at Liem Thien.

Logistics

12. In northern North Vietnam, only the northwest rail border crossing at Lao Cai was visible; there was a fairly high count of rolling stock, but no military-related activity was observed. In the Panhandle, coastal shipping and vehicle traffic on main roads were moderate and comparable to levels seen earlier this year. At Dong Hoi, about 40 vessels were noted in or near the port. Dockside storage areas, however, showed no buildup or large stockpiles of supplies.

Railbed Construction

13. Little construction progress was noted along the abandoned railbed near Dong Hoi. Excavation and grading of two small railyards located several miles north and south of Dong Hoi appear completed, and an additional few hundred feet of railbed has been filled and graded since this construction work was initially

[redacted] The two railyard clearings measure about 1,500 feet by 80 feet and could accommodate two to four tracks. Additional grading for transloading areas and wide access roads to nearby Route 1 also have been completed.

*Developments in the DMZ Area**Road Improvements*

14. In the north central DMZ, survey traces were visible along Route 1002, part of the network of roads making up NVA Route 42. With some improvements already begun, the NVA are upgrading the road system between Route 101 and Route 9 near Cam Lo. The photography reveals that the southernmost segment in this network has received heavy traffic recently, suggesting that a large portion of the vehicular traffic crossing the DMZ is passing through Cam Lo, avoiding the congestion at Dong Ha.

15. The upgrading of the DMZ routes is part of an extensive road construction effort by the North Vietnamese to improve their overland transport routes into and within northern MR 1. Aerial photography [redacted] over Quang Tri

Province showed that the Communists now have large road rollers -- not previously seen outside North Vietnam -- and have built an asphalt processing plant with the apparent intent of paving the main highways, the first probably being at least portions of Route 9 between Dong Ha and Khe Sanh.

Logistic Facilities

16. Changes in the Bat Lake region, which extends about 15 miles north from the DMZ along highways 1A and 101, consist of several new vehicle parks and support-storage areas containing a total of 450 trucks and about 200 storage-support buildings. Almost a like number of installations have been deactivated and their buildings dismantled and trucks removed. The reason for this movement appears to be an effort to move these functions closer to the DMZ.

17. Two new ammunition storage areas were detected about one-half mile north of the eastern DMZ. The facilities had a total of 34 storage buildings, providing about 13,000 square feet of storage space. Because of their proximity to the DMZ, these depots are probably used as strategic storage sites for North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam.

18. A new petroleum storage area is under construction about three miles north of the DMZ. The depot consists of five revetted 21-metric-ton-tanks, four empty revetments, four probable pumphouses, and five support buildings. The tanks are connected by a branch line to the main pipeline which extends through the DMZ and into South Vietnam.

New NVA Front in South Vietnam's MR I

19. COMINT of June 6 has identified a new front, the Tri-Thien Front, in northern MR I. The Front headquarters is the tactical control authority for at least the three NVA infantry divisions in the area. Its relationship to MR Tri-Thien, the overall administrative authority in the region, however, is not known at this time. Although further information will be required to determine the full extent of the Front's responsibilities, its formation may be an indication that the North Vietnamese are reverting back to a command and control structure in northern MR I similar to what existed prior to May 1973. At that time, the NVA tactical control authority (the B-5 Front) and MR Tri-Thien-Hue were merged to form MR Tri-Thien.

April HES Results

20. According to the latest Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) results, there was virtually no change in the population control situation in South Vietnam during

Communist and South Vietnamese Regular Combat Forces in South Vietnam

South Vietnam

Regular Combat Forces

		MR 1	
VC/NVA ¹	RVNAF ²	VC/NVA	RVNAF
185,000	372,000	83,000	101,000
		325th	VNMC
		324B	Airborne
		304th	1st
		2d	2d
		673d AAA	3d
			Regional Forces

1. Includes VC/NVA personnel in ground combat, combat support, and air defense units and local force companies and platoons.

2. RVNAF Ground Order of Battle. Includes assigned personnel in ARVN/VNMC ground combat and combat support units, and Regional Force battalions. Although present for duty strength is no longer available, it is estimated to be about 85% of assigned strength.

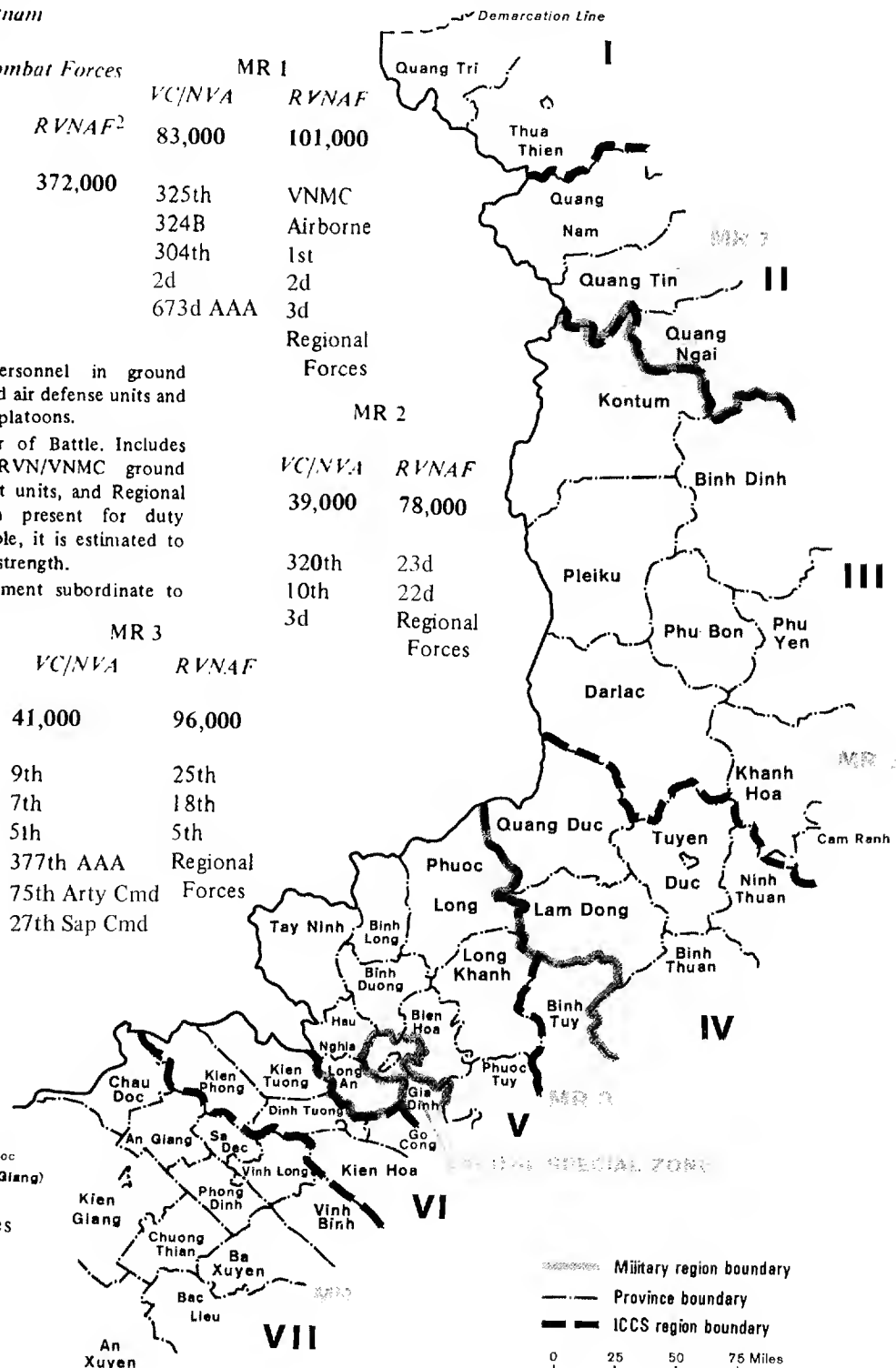
3. Only one infantry regiment subordinate to the division.

MR 3

VC/NVA	RVNAF
41,000	96,000
9th	25th
7th	18th
5th	5th
377th AAA	Regional Forces
75th Arty Cmd	
27th Sap Cmd	

MR 4

VC/NVA	RVNAF
22,000	97,000
1st ³	21st
	9th
	7th
	Regional Forces



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April. About 82% of the country's 20 million people were living in government-controlled areas at the end of the month, compared to some 83% in March. Less than 3% of the total population reportedly was in Communist-controlled areas in April, and the remaining 15% were in contested areas.

21. At the province level, Quang Tri showed the greatest gain in government control -- 10 percentage points -- which was attributed to an increase in the number of resettlers. Lam Dong Province in MR 2 also showed a moderate gain of 6 percentage points. On the negative side, government control in Kien Tuong Province dropped by 16 percentage points, owing to increased fighting. Control in several other provinces -- including Bac Lieu, Long Khanh, and Phong Dinh -- also declined for the same reason, but by lesser amounts.

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ANNEX A

INFILTRATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE PERSONNEL
TO THE SOUTH

Since the implementation of the cease-fire settlement for South Vietnam on January 27, 1973, some 160,000 North Vietnamese troops and specialists have infiltrated southward. About 135,000 of this total have started south since that time. Since June 15, 1973, when the original accord was reaffirmed, some 109,000 troops and specialists have been sent south. The table shows the number of North Vietnamese troops starting south, by destination, since January 1, 1973.

As stated in the June 5 report, the DoD figures are about 2,500 less than the numbers shown above. In the table below, the DoD figures are indicated in parentheses.

Number of Troops Entering the Pipeline Destined
for South Vietnam, Southern Laos, and Cambodia
Since January 1, 1973¹

	COSVN	B-3 Front	MR 5	MR Tri- Thien	Southern Laos/ MR 559	Total
Total	52,500	15,500	24,000	17,000 (14,500)	26,500	135,500 (133,000)
1973						
Jan-Mar	12,000	5,500	4,000	5,000	1,000	27,500
Apr-Jun	1,000	....	....	7,000	1,500	9,500
Jul-Aug	....	....	3,000	....	1,500	4,500
Sep	....	....	2,000	2,000	3,000	7,000
Oct	....	....	....	....	14,000	14,000
Nov	1,000	1,000	....	....	5,500	7,500
Dec	3,500	1,000	....	....	....	4,500
1974						
Jan	10,500	3,000	....	....	....	13,500
Feb	5,500	2,000	1,500	....	....	9,000
Mar	12,500	2,000	4,500	....	....	19,000
Apr	6,500	1,000	5,500	2,500 (....)	....	15,500 (13,000)
May	....	....	3,500	500	....	4,000
Jun	....	....	....	....	....	....
Jul 1-2	....	....	....	....	....	....

1. Excluding special-purpose personnel. The totals are rounded to the nearest 500.

ANNEX B

KHMER COMMUNIST FIREPOWER

Summary

Since August 1973, the Khmer Communists (KC) are estimated to have expended more than 3,000 medium and large caliber howitzer, mortar, and rocket rounds against government positions and cities. Although the period included some of the heaviest shelling of the war, KC firepower -- with one exception -- has not been decisive. Unless the North Vietnamese equip the KC with large numbers of howitzers and field guns, and provide extensive training, this situation is unlikely to change.

Strategy and Tactics

KC artillery* deployment provides support for the major battlefields in the southern, southwestern, and central parts of Cambodia. Howitzers and mortars are dispersed in independent sections of one to three tubes, with the largest concentration around Phnom Penh (see the accompanying table), while the overwhelming majority of rockets are located in the capital area. This deployment has remained relatively static, in large part because their most important firepower component -- the 105-mm howitzer -- is difficult to transport without heavy trucks and good roads. In addition, most artillery sections are assigned or attached to infantry units -- usually regiments or divisions -- or local battlefield commands. The only large, organic artillery unit -- the 175th Regiment deployed near Prey Veng -- operates primarily as independent battalions against shipping on the Mekong.

**Probable Areas of Deployment
of KC 105-mm Howitzers
and 120-mm Mortars**

Area	105s	120s
Phnom Penh	3	4
Lovek	2	2
Kampot	2	2
Kompong Speu	2	....
Lower Route 4	2	2
Prey Veng	2	2
Kompong Cham	2	....
Kompong Thom	1	2
Takeo	1	1
Siem Reap	....	2

In practice, the KC use their firepower in two principal roles -- harassment and siege fire -- rather than in combined operations with infantry units. During

* The KC employ four medium and large caliber, high-trajectory weapons in an artillery role -- 105-mm howitzers, (105s), 120-mm mortars (120s), and 107/122-mm rockets (107s and 122s). All other weapons held by the KC are smaller and suitable only for organic unit support.

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the last nine months, more than 20% of all attacks-by-fire have been ineffective harassing attacks in areas where major battles were not underway. These attacks averaged only about eight rounds -- barely enough for even experienced crews to adjust fire on target.

When larger artillery concentrations are available for shelling major FANK positions, the KC employ their firepower to try to demoralize the FANK defenders and civilian populace. The best example of this is the sustained attacks on the city of Phnom Penh from late January to mid-February, when the KC fired more than 1,000 rounds of mixed caliber -- the most concentrated fire of the war. This fire was aimed at populated areas and designed to produce panic in the capital, but it failed to do so. The same pattern of concentrated fire -- with similar results -- occurred at Kompong Cham in August and September 1973 and at Lovek in May of this year (see Cambodian map). Indeed, in only one instance has KC artillery fire been decisive. At the Lovek Training Center, the fortuitous placement of a few rounds destroyed the garrison's ammunition dump, forcing the center's evacuation.

For the most part, the KC have failed to use their firepower to neutralize FANK defensive positions prior to infantry assaults -- the most important military role for artillery. Moreover, artillery fire, when it has been directed at FANK positions, has generally preceded ground attacks by such extended periods that the advantage has been lost. As a result, KC infantry units in combat generally must rely on organic mortars, hand-held rockets, and recoilless rifles for fire support. In this respect, the KC's switch to large-unit attacks was premature. Indeed, the recent KC shift to a "provincial" strategy, which takes advantage of FANK's weakness in outlying areas, may have been a tacit admission that, combined with their other shortcomings, they cannot win conventional battles such as those fought around Phnom Penh in 1973 without adequate fire support.

Capabilities

Even if the KC used their firepower to support ground attacks against FANK positions, however, the impact probably would be limited. Their artillery inventory is probably small in relation to their force structure, making it difficult to mass fire against individual targets or provide support for low-priority battlefields. For example, government-held areas in the northwest have been almost totally free from shellings. Moreover, FANK enjoys a substantial firepower advantage and the luxury of air support and thus can sustain relatively heavy counter-battery fire. This in turn makes the KC even more reluctant to concentrate weapons because of the danger of losing a substantial part of their scarce resources.

A second major constraint is the composition of the KC arsenal. Of the four weapons they use as artillery, only the 105-mm howitzer is suited to effective support of large-scale operations against FANK. The 122-mm rocket has about the same range as the 105 (nearly 7 miles), but it is much less accurate, especially

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when fired from the crude, locally manufactured platforms generally used by the KC. The 107-mm rocket suffers from the same lack of accuracy and a shorter range (5 miles), while the 120-mm mortar has the needed accuracy, but its range -- about half that of the 105 -- makes it more suited for use as an organic unit support weapon.

KC reliance on 105s for combat artillery support, however, poses a number of problems. Because ammunition and spare parts must be captured or purchased on the black market, resupply is uncertain, and shortages occur frequently. At Kompong Cham and Prey Veng, for example, even though rounds were available, the KC were forced to fire them without fuses, thereby precluding detonation on impact. Moreover, as tubes are used, accuracy declines as the rifling is worn down, and few, if any, replacements are available. Stocks of the relatively sophisticated aiming devices needed to accurately place fire are probably inadequate as well.

Finally, little is known about KC internal training capabilities, but they probably are minimal. FANK, for example, did not develop effective fire support or a viable internal training capability until mid-1973, despite extensive US [] training. While some training on the 105 could have been provided to the KC by North Vietnamese artillery units, these units left Cambodia for South Vietnam last fall.

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The impact of inadequate training is two-fold. First, accurate fire is difficult if crews are not proficient in aiming techniques or if they are not supported by competent forward observers. While the latter have been observed in KC communications, performance to date suggests that their contribution has been small. Second, the 105 requires periodic cleaning, lubrication, and adjustment, and with gun crews not thoroughly familiar with the operation of their weapons, improper maintenance rapidly reduces combat effectiveness and could cause a decline in the operational inventory.

Prospects

Until they integrate artillery and infantry operations, the KC will remain essentially a guerrilla force engaged in main force battles. Moreover, any substantial improvement in KC fire support capabilities must come from the North Vietnamese, including howitzers and field guns needed to give proper support to ground operations. Weapons would have to be provided in significant quantities, ammunition resupply would have to be assured, and extensive training in both weapons fire and combined operations would be required -- something the North Vietnamese have been unwilling to do.

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